

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-22 (Cancelled).

23. (Currently Amended) A process for fermentatively preparing an L-amino acid, comprising

fermenting a modified microorganism of the genus *Escherichia* which already produces L-amino acids before being modified for a time and under conditions suitable for the production of the L-amino acid;

concentrating the L-amino acid in the medium ~~and/or~~ from the *Escherichia* cells;

determining the concentration of the L-amino acids produced; and

isolating the L-amino acid from the medium or from the *Escherichia* cells,

wherein said modified microorganism comprises an inactivated *poxB* gene which encodes a pyruvate oxidase, wherein inactivation is achieved by one or more methods of mutagenesis selected from the group consisting of deletion mutagenesis with deletion of at least one base pair in the *poxB* gene, insertional mutagenesis due to homologous recombination in the *poxB* gene, and transition or transversion mutagenesis with incorporation of a non-sense mutation in the *poxB* gene, wherein the *poxB* gene is obtainable by PCR amplification using SEQ ID NO:5 and SEQ ID NO:8.

Claim 24 (cancelled).

25. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 23, wherein said L-amino acid is L-threonine, L-valine, L-lysine, L-isoleucine, L-methionine, or L-homoserine.

26. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 25, wherein said L-amino acid is L-threonine.

27. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 25, wherein said L-amino acid is L-valine.

28. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 25, wherein said L-amino acid is L-lysine.

Claim 29 (Cancelled).

30. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim 23, wherein the modified microorganism further comprises at least one overexpressed gene product compared to the unmodified starting microorganism, wherein the gene product is encoded by ~~a gene selected from the group consisting of:~~

~~at least one gene encoded by an E. coli thrABC operon, which codes for aspartate kinase, homoserine dehydrogenase, homoserine kinase, and threonine synthase;~~

~~a Corynebacterium glutamicum pyc gene which codes for pyruvate carboxylase;~~

~~an E. coli pps gene which codes for phosphoenol pyruvate synthase;~~

~~an E. coli ppc gene which codes for phosphoenol pyruvate carboxylase;~~

~~E. coli pntA and pntB genes which code for pyridine transhydrogenase;~~

~~an E. coli rhtB gene which which codes for a protein that imparts homoserine resistance;~~

~~an E. coli mqo gene which codes for malate:quinone oxidoreductase;~~

~~an E. coli rhtC gene which codes for a protein that imparts threonine resistance, or~~

~~an a *Corynebacterium glutamicum* thrE gene which codes for a protein that provides  
threonine export, and~~

an E. coli gdhA gene which codes for glutamate dehydrogenase.

Claims 31 and 32 (Cancelled)

33. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 23, wherein the modified  
microorganism is *Escherichia coli*.

Claim 34 (Cancelled).

35. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 26, wherein the modified  
microorganism is MG442 $\Delta$ poxB transformed with plasmid pMW218gdhA.

36. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 26, wherein the modified  
microorganism is MG442 $\Delta$ poxB transformed with plasmid pMW219rhtC.

37. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 28, wherein the modified  
microorganism is TOC21R $\Delta$ poxB.

38. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 27, wherein the modified  
microorganism is B-12288 $\Delta$ poxB.

39. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 23, wherein inactivation is achieved by deletion mutagenesis with deletion of at least one base pair in the poxB gene.

40. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 23, wherein inactivation is achieved by insertional mutagenesis due to homologous recombination.

41. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 23, wherein inactivation is achieved by transition or transversion mutagenesis with incorporation of a non-sense mutation in the poxB gene.

42. (Currently Amended) The process of Claim 23, wherein the poxB gene prior to being inactivated comprises SEQ ID NO:1.

43. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 23, wherein the poxB gene prior to being inactivated comprises a polynucleotide sequence encoding a protein comprising SEQ ID NO:2.